

Lancaster Intelligencer.

THURSDAY EVENING, APRIL 22, 1880.

Expert Evidence Again.

Two Whitaker cases excite the attention of the country just now, and in both inquiries the testimony of experts as to handwriting is a main feature. In the Philadelphia case the testimony offered on each side is equally decided as to the genuineness and falsity of the signature to the will which is in controversy. There being two parties in the case, the one interested in proving and the other in disproving the will, it is a necessary result that experts are found and produced who swear stoutly for the side engaging them. The West Point cadet case is a one-sided sort of inquiry in which nearly all the parties are interested in getting at the truth, and consequently the expert testimony may possibly be found to harmonize, though the chances are about even that it will not. Experience has demonstrated the absolute unreliability of expert evidence, and in handwriting especially has it been found deceptive. It seems plausible that a handwriting should be capable of identification, and under most circumstances it is. The only protection bankers have is their knowledge of the style of signature of their customers and they are not often mistaken. But sometimes they are deceived, and it appears that the most skillful in identifying handwritings may be deceived by those skilled in forging them when a fair opportunity is given the latter to exercise their art. Just as in war the assailant has the advantage in appliances over the defense and a big gun can always be made to pierce the heaviest armor, so the forger with the necessary science and skill can generally beat the banker.

It is the fact that there can never be absolute certainty in the mind of the expert witness that makes his testimony really worthless. He can only testify to resemblances and is bound to admit that with the necessary care and skill those resemblances can be counterfeited. Perhaps he may not so admit, but it is nevertheless the fact, as common experience teaches. Mr. Rauch, one of the witnesses in the Whitaker will case, testified that a certain writing was made by the "wrist movement" and another by the "shoulder movement," whereas it appeared that one had been written with the toes and the other with the elbows, the writers in each case having lost their hands.

These facts, of course, deprived Mr. Rauch's testimony of any practical value, and yet did not necessarily contradict it; since, as he said, he only testified as an expert to appearances and not to positive facts. The appearance of the writing may have been, as he said, that of wrist and shoulder writing. But appearances are notoriously deceptive, and it is not surprising that the testimony of experts founded upon such a bed of sand should prove so treacherous. Yet it is still called for in the court. It is taken not as a positive proof but as an approximation to it. But, obviously, it only serves to ensnare the truth and destroy it. It needs to be corroborated by other evidence sufficient in itself to prove the facts; and if this is done it may be dispensed with. The propensity of the courts to accept such evidence would work a great deal more wrong than it does, but for the fact which we have noted, that it is always possible to get expert evidence on both sides of a case, and it therefore is neutralized and practically thrown out. This was conspicuously the case in the Hayden murder trial, where expert testimony was so ardently relied upon that the state sent a professor to Europe to examine the arsenic manufactures, that he might return and swear how two packages of the poison differed from each other and never could have come out of the same jar. He proved it scientifically and conclusively until the other side got a chance, when they clearly showed that it was all nonsense, and the jury after listening for two months to experts, were compelled to ignore every word they had heard on either side, and to exercise all their wits to believe that the witnesses were neither fools nor knaves.

We have ourselves had occasion to test the power of one of the handwriting experts who has testified in one of these Whitaker cases, and who is probably as good as any of them, and he showed by the peculiar formation of the letters, of which peculiarities he gave an exhaustive catalogue, that the writing was that of a particular individual, but in a short time afterwards another person acknowledged that he was the writer. Probably if the fees of professional experts were smaller their confidence in their art would be smaller and their number fewer.

The Columbia Herald has grave apprehensions lest the Democracy in these parts be drifting to ruin, and has advice to that effect from venerable Democrats of Lancaster, who "have grown gray" in the service of the party. It has possibly not occurred to its informants that while their beards were lengthening and whitening the Lancaster Democracy have been surmounting obstacles such as beset the party in no other city or state; and in the face of a most adverse general election they have elected and re-elected a mayor, and obtained full control of the most important three branches of the city government. But to those who contributed nothing to this result, of course, it forebodes only "ruin" to the party! Meanwhile the total Democratic vote in Lancaster county has increased from 9,064 for Duckalew in 1872, to 9,638 in 1876, on the presidential ticket, and from 7,581 in 1872 to 8,714 in 1876 for governor. A little more of the "ruin," please.

If the Patriot will kindly tell the special instances when the INTELLIGENCER convicted Democrats on "its own naked suspicions" we will answer it whether or not we had any further evidence. The Patriot always fails to furnish a bill of particulars. It has not yet told us what "lie" about Senator Wallace has been repeated through the INTELLIGENCER. We are ignorant of any and the Patriot uniformly fails to specify.

JUDGE PARKER in his speech before the anti-Tilden convention said that the split in the party in New York would lose the state to the Democracy and would probably defeat its presidential candidate. Probably this would be the result if New York politicians had all the say in the matter. They would perhaps be foolish enough to lose the president as they did the governor. But there is not the slightest probability that the national convention will be as silly. The candidate for president nominated at Cincinnati will be one who will command the vote of every Democrat in the land. The Democratic sense is not going to be offended again. We did it once when Greeley was nominated, but the object then was to catch Republican votes. We learned then that the Democratic vote is first to be careful. There is no disposition on any hand now to repeat this error. The trouble threatening now is the revolt against personal domination; and the easy way to cure that is to give the party what it has a right to ask—a champion, but not a boss.

THE pen-portrait of Hon. Jere S. Black will appear in the "White House Gallery" of the Philadelphia Times tomorrow, sketched by a gentleman of this city, whose personal relations with Judge Black enable him in some degree to present to the public those phases of his life and character which it has been the aim of the Times to portray in its series of press pictures. Judge Black's personal popularity, his general acquaintance with the bar here, in connection with his departure for England on Saturday, will give this sketch of him at least local and timely interest. He is not, however, a candidate for president in any sense of the term, however worthy he may be of the honors of that high office. His name is not likely to be mentioned in the Cincinnati convention; certainly it will not be by the advice of his nearest friends nor with his own consent.

If the Harrisburg Patriot is really able to "comprehend the incomprehensible" it no doubt understands why it preached some years ago a "true doctrine" that it fails to practice now. We don't; but then we don't assume to comprehend the incomprehensible.

MINOR TOPICS.

THE Western Tobacco Journal, published at Cincinnati, Ohio, by Messrs. Thomas Mason and George B. Bentley, comes to us enlarged and in remodeled form. It now contains sixteen pages of reading matter, and in addition to its very full reports of the tobacco market in all parts of the world, has added a department devoted exclusively to the interests of the Cincinnati grocery trade. It contains besides much well selected miscellaneous reading. The Journal deserves a hearty support from the tobacco men and grocers, and the public generally.

IN the Virginia Republican convention, yesterday, there was much disorder on account of contested seats. The "straight-outs" succeeded in electing chairman. In the Georgia Republican convention Major Smith, a Blaine man, was declared elected. The Grant men threaten to bolt. The Illinois Democrats lean toward Palmer; the Vermont Democracy favor Hancock; the Greenback state convention of Illinois met in Springfield yesterday, chose delegates to the Greenback-Labor national convention, and nominated a full state ticket.

THE Texas Democrats made a modest, moderate and sensible deliverance at their convention yesterday. They chose E. G. Bower elector-at-large and a full delegation to Cincinnati. The resolutions adopted advise the support of the two-thirds rule, but the delegates go un instructed. The resolutions also declare that the devotion of Gen. Hancock to the constitutional rights and privileges of citizens entitles him to the confidence of the people, and that Texas will, when called upon, show appreciation of his generosity and magnanimity, and pledge the undivided and enthusiastic support of the party to whoever the national convention may see fit to nominate.

DR. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES read a brilliant essay on Jonathan Edwards before the Chestnut Street club, Boston, on Monday. Most of the essay was devoted to the theological opinions of the stern New Englander. Dr. Holmes severely criticized their harshness. On the character of Edwards he spoke with kindly sympathy which followed, showed himself disposed to take up the defense of Edwards. The old theologian, he said, did not differ radically from the current theology of New England. Fifty years before him and a hundred years after him New England was largely inspired by his theology, and it can be traced home to Scotland. We are rather a New Scotland than New England in that respect. This theology has largely affected our present life.

PERSONAL.

Secretary SHERMAN went to New York yesterday.

It is understood that Admiral PORTER will represent the navy department on the board of visitors to the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

Hon. SCHUYLER COLFAX will deliver the annual address before the corps of cadets of the Pennsylvania military academy at Chester, on June 9.

STEPHEN P. SLOCUM, who had been Democratic candidate for lieutenant-governor of Rhode Island, was elected mayor of Newport yesterday by about 100 majority. The senate yesterday confirmed WILLIAM A. NEWELL, of New Jersey, to be governor of Washington Territory, and E. J. SMITH, of Delaware, to be consul to Chin Kiang.

MR. JOHN IRELAND, for many years connected with the business department of the New York Times, being cashier since 1861, died yesterday of consumption, at Orange, N. J., aged 38.

Although it is settled that Prince Leopold is going to Canada on a visit to the Princess Louise, nothing whatever has been projected, much less settled, as to a tour in the United States. His movements will be regulated by the state of his health, which continues to be very delicate, and by the queen's wishes.

"Balladeers?"

For the INTELLIGENCER: We learned through the INTELLIGENCER of last evening that Hayes Grier, of the Columbia Herald, in his last issue has left off his steam which has been closed up for a whole week since the county convention. We can easily account for all the abuse he desires to shower on the head of the honest Democrats of Lancaster city. It must certainly have been very humiliating for him (Grier) to report to his master (Mr. Wallace) that he was unable to deliver the delegates of the Northern district. It must surely be much more humiliating for him to think that the word has gone abroad that he (Grier) no longer carries the Democratic party of Lancaster county in his pocket (not even the Northern district), after he has repeatedly represented in Harrisburg that such was a fact. He certainly must feel that he does not even carry a delegate that will do his bidding, unless it is Mr. Given, who was only allowed to go by the magnanimity of the opposite side, for he did not receive a majority of the votes and would certainly have been defeated had a second ballot been taken.

After saying he would name fourteen enumerators of the census in the Northern district and promising some districts to three or four different parties through Mr. Wallace's arrangement with Cameron and Mr. Snowden, and then to secure only one delegate for his side and that a gift from the opposition, must certainly hurt his feelings very much and tell him plainly that his influence amounts to nothing. He seems to think that the convention was fearfully bulldozed. "Oh, how the mighty have fallen" when the great and bold delegates from Columbia acknowledge that they were bulldozed.

Men whom he has seen fit to call bulldozers and squealers would blush for shame to be classed with such company as Mr. Grier. They do not belong to the Democratic party for the sake of looking around for any little position that will pay a few dollars, but they are Democrats from principle, and they are the men that help to roll up the heavy Democratic vote of Lancaster county, which increases year by year, never asking one cent for their labor nor expecting to receive an office under the general government nor did they call in any Republicans such as Sheriff Strine, Andy Kaufman, Tom Cochran, Amos Mylin and others to give them advice.

If any bulldozing was done it was certainly on the part of Mr. Grier. By what authority did he (when calling the roll of districts and after the district had voted) ask to see all the delegates from that district and question them if such was the vote of the district? Had he proceeded with the call of the districts and allowed them to vote without questioning them as to the correctness of such vote, there would not have been one word from the city Democrats. Was it gentlemanly for him, when Mr. Bechtel desired to change his vote, to throw his arms around his (Bechtel's) neck and try to dissuade him from making the change? Mr. Grier alone is responsible for all the disturbance. He certainly does the police an injustice, for they did not interfere, only to tell Andy Kaufman and Sheriff Strine that this was a Democratic convention and that they would not be allowed to interfere.

Even after Mr. Given declared he had been elected to preside, and would preside as chairman, he felt that he was not entitled to the place, and withdrew before allowing a fair vote to be taken to test his chances of election. A DEMOCRAT.

LATEST NEWS BY MAIL.

George A. Bennett, a New York policeman, yesterday committed suicide by shooting.

John Breen, a tramp, was killed on Tuesday at Fort Erie, Ont., while trying to steal a ride on a railroad train.

Base ball: At Providence—Providence, 10, Brown University, 6. At Troy—Troy City, 9, Baltimore, 6.

The treasury department yesterday directed the transfer of \$5,000,000 in gold bullion from New York to the Philadelphia mint, to be coined into eagles and half eagles.

Herman Linberg and Wm. McGarry, strangers to each other, met in a Chicago saloon on Tuesday night, quarreled, and Linberg shot and killed McGarry. The murderer was arrested.

The Geneva award bill, after first being amended to exclude the claims of the insurance companies, was defeated in the Senate yesterday by the adoption of a motion to indefinitely postpone it.

A quarrel occurred near Compton Mills, N. J., between James Sheppard and his brother-in-law, Heinrich Moran. Moran stabbed Sheppard twice in the back with a large case knife, inflicting a fatal wound. Moran is at large.

Three men in the jail at Moberly, Mo., charged with murder, were taken from the jail by a mob of marauders. One of the accused, named Ira Caisson, confessed, whereupon he was put back in jail, and the other two, named Yancoy and Mitchell, were hanged.

Around Marlborough, N. J., a severe frost made havoc with peach blossoms and small vegetable crops. Out of 1,800 peach trees in the orchard of Foreman Taylor, the blossoms of nearly 1,000 were killed. Great damage was done throughout that section.

On Tuesday, at Mayfield, Ky., W. W. Ezell, of that place, shot and killed Dr. Dalton, of Collaway county, on account of an attempted elopement of Ezell's sister-in-law with Dalton a year ago, which Ezell prevented. Ezell claims that Dalton had repeatedly threatened to kill him, and that he acted in self-defense. He now says that Weaver did it.

Near Jacksonville Fla., a duel has occurred just beyond the city limits, between two Cubans, Raphael Toledo and Yudiabiro Pina, both cigar makers. Three shots were exchanged, and Toledo was killed. There were no seconds. The affair was witnessed by a boy who happened to pass that way.

In a Bewildered State of Mind.

Harrisburg Patriot.

If we really comprehend the incomprehensible Lancaster INTELLIGENCER it now believes that a Democratic journal ought not to "hold Democrats guilty until they are proved innocent." We are glad to observe this change of heart in the Patriot. The INTELLIGENCER, as we distinctly remember that we undertook to teach it the true doctrine in this regard some years ago when it insisted on convicting Democrats on its own naked suspicions.

AMUSEMENT NOTES.

What the Players are Doing.

The McGibneys appear in Coatesville tonight.

Jack Haverly is 5 feet high and weighs 9 pounds.

Miss Noble opens in Baltimore on Monday night.

Carcross's minstrels will be in Pittsburgh next week.

Annie Ward Tiffany is to have a new play next year.

Miss Nellie McHenry, of the Troubadour troupe, is the wife of John Webster.

Ben Maginley will play "The Danites" in this country during McKee Rankin's visit to Europe.

Mary Anderson closes her season in Portland on the 8th. She will then rest until September.

L. N. Beers left B. Macaulay's company after having that gentleman arrested and fined for assault.

Barney Macaulay closes his season in Manchester, N. H., on next Wednesday evening.

There was a big demand for seats for Emma Abbott's opera, this morning, when the chart opened.

Miss Julia Wilson, the Tot of Den Thompson's company, has purchased a home in Connecticut.

Salsbury's Troubadours have very handsome printing, and they show up nine different kinds of lithographs.

Ada Cavendish goes to England at once, but will return to this country in the autumn.

Annie Clark, who was here in "Our Boys," was formerly Mrs. W. S. Clark, but she has obtained a divorce.

The shows which will visit Lancaster during this and next week are the best this city has seen for some time.

The Ford amateur dramatic club of Savannah, Ga., gave Miss Belle Mackenzie a benefit a few evenings since. She appeared in "Dr. Cleave."

R. M. Hooley is said to be making money, but several people are still waiting for salaries due them from the Megatherian minstrels.

Nellie Larkelle, who played in "Evangeline" last summer with John Stetson's company, will be a member of one of M. B. Lewis's companies.

Billy Barry, the negro comedian, slapped the mouth of Dick Kelly, another actor, in New York on Monday, and he was held in bail to answer the charge.

W. A. Paul, an excellent young comedian, who made the greatest hit of the year in "Princess Toto" when it was played in New York, is said to be dying of consumption in a Boston hospital.

When Willie Edouin and his wife (Alice) were in New York, they formed a company of their own, the "Surprise Party" loses its best piece.

The Windsor theatre in New York, will see more people than any other house of amusement in this country, and last week Tony Denier nightly turned away people who were unable to gain admission.

George W. Hanley, Irish comedian, now with Tony Denier, will appear in a new specialty next season, which he calls "Electric Characters." He will appear in six different characters, changing his clothes on the stage.

James Collier, the popular manager of the "Columbia" and "Banker's Daughter" companies, will shortly marry Miss Emily Baker, who is with Joe Emmet's company.

Don Juan Wallings, formerly a resident of Columbia, keeps the restaurant of the New National theatre, Philadelphia. A former resident of Lancaster, he received his annual benefit at that house.

James W. Collier has expended a large sum of money for new scenery, costumes, &c., to be used in the production of "A Celebrated Case" throughout the country. Mr. Collier's company will be here on Monday night.

J. H. Haverly is having built a tent large enough to contain an eight-foot mile track. When it is finished he will organize a company of noted pedestrians, and give walking exhibitions through the country. It is just possible that some of the performers may be obliged to exercise their professional skill in getting home.—Dramatic News.

The Salsbury Troubadours are the finest artists in their line in this country, and it is said that if their season continues as prosperous as it has been, they will receive \$40,000. They will open in New York shortly, where they will play their third engagement this season, and will then go to Europe, where they will remain six months.

Emma Abbott, who will be here in "Paul and Virginia" next Tuesday evening with 45 artists, is the only person who directed the transfer of \$5,000,000 in gold bullion from New York to the Philadelphia mint, to be coined into eagles and half eagles.

The present company began the opera in New Orleans early in February, and it was a sweeping success from the outset. In one performance the curtain rose eight times on the love scene and the duet, such was the ardor of the audience. When Bob Ingersoll heard Miss Abbott in it he said singing was "like the rustling of wings" as he put it, and he was right, and as pure as the dawn. Miss Abbott herself says: "The piece is extremely intricate, though there is a great deal of beauty in it which appears simple to some. Even when sung to uneducated people the harmonies of the piece reach their hearts, and the pathetic parts are always markedly effective. But it is very hard to sing, especially so in the bird song. The opera always draws well, because it is a familiar story, free from objectionable allusions of any kind, and it is a very good representation, and is one of the best adaptations of its kind ever put upon any stage."

BERLIN FISHERY EXHIBITION.

Poor Show Made by Our English Cousins.

A dispatch from Berlin to the Times says: The British government made no grant for representation in the International fishery exhibition which was opened here yesterday. The British exhibition being wholly the result of private enterprise. Much of the space originally allotted to England has been taken by Americans, who now hold it by right of pre-emption. The very slender and unworthy participation of England is all the more striking by contrast with that of America, her immediate neighbor in the building.

Two hundred and fifty tons of piscatorial material, valued at £10,000, has already arrived from America, prominent among which is a whaling boat fully equipped with all its gear ready for action. Another rarity is a purse seine from 200 to 300 fathoms long, and from 20 to 30 fathoms deep, used for netting wide shoals of mackerel in mid-ocean. Six specimens of a peculiar fish, called "the dory," which experts were very anxious to see have also been brought over.

Perhaps the most attractive, as certainly the most novel objects in the American collection, is a model of the twin screw steamer, the Fish Hawk, specially constructed for the artificial latching of piscine ova, chiefly those of shad and cod. A fire engine with horses yoked and men seated is also on exhibition among the American exhibits.

Is That the Reason?

Carlsruhe Herald, Rep.

"Impediment of judges" is a farce which will not be tried again.—Jefferson, in 1807. Judge Patterson has reason, therefore, for insisting that the only reflection on the conduct of a judge should be by impeachment.

Stories of Eye-Witnesses.

Mr. James H. Hockin, who was ticket taker in the art gallery, was the last man to leave the room when the crash occurred.

Beauty Here and Abroad.

St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

A Fourth street bookseller having some grudge against England has been exhibiting in his show-window an assortment of photographs of the professional beauties of London society before which the untraveled American ladies and gentlemen then walks away saying to himself: "If those are the beauties, I wonder what the ugly ones are like." Of these beauties the most famous of all, Mrs. Langtry, the Lily of Jersey, first brought into notice by the portrait painter, Millais, and raised to notoriety by the admiration of the Prince of Wales's set, has a shapely nose and a pair of tender eyes, but her nose and mouth are anything but beautiful, and her jaws are sunken in with an ugly depression among the features.

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Stories of Eye-Witnesses.

Mr. James H. Hockin, who was ticket taker in the art gallery, was the last man to leave the room when the crash occurred.

To a reporter he told the following story: "It was just about a quarter to 9 o'clock when the ceiling of the art gallery began to tremble and crack. When it was noticed I sent for Mr. Mackay, the superintendent, who came to me and said, 'Hocking, get the people out of here as soon as you can. Do it as quietly as you can, for God's sake.' There were then fifty-four persons in the room, nearly one-half of whom were ladies. I went in and began to get them out, although I hardly knew on what excuse to do so to avoid a panic. Finally fragments of the ceiling began to drop, and the first thing we knew great rents began to appear in the side wall. The gas pipes are suspended from the roof by copper wires and were swaying to and fro. Suddenly they all fell to the floor, leaving us in darkness. Just before the lights went out I could see the west wall bulging out toward Fourth avenue, and a group of about half a dozen people huddling about my desk. I put my arms around them, and exerting all my strength I pushed them through the door toward the main hall. I then felt a puff of fresh air as the wall fell with a crash. A portion of the beams fell upon my back, crushing my hat and tearing my coat. Then I saw from the head of the stairs one of the most terrific scenes I ever witnessed. The people rushed from the dancing hall with pale faces and garments torn. No regard was observed for the ladies whatever. I did not see a single act of manliness in the struggling mass, who seemed to have lost their senses. The musicians fled and left their instruments behind, and right in front of me a young fellow in a fashionable dress young men drop the arms of the stairs like cowardly hounds they were. I tried to do the best I could under the circumstances, but I knew there was no one in the gallery who could help me. Mr. Story, the artist, was about six inches in front of me when the crash came, and he acted with great valor, helping me to drag the people out of the room. I recollected that there were \$100,000 worth of oil paintings on the wall, and I saw that I was too late to do anything but try to save human life. I rushed into the adjoining dancing hall and helped several gentlemen to carry out wounded people from under the debris. Mr. Hocking said he could remember no more, as the excitement was so great that he could think of nothing but the wounded, whose shrieks were beginning to be heard."

Com'th vs. Amos Albright, larceny, three indictments. The commonwealth's testimony was to the effect that defendant and Frank Blair had stolen about 160 pounds of iron belonging to the Pennsylvania railroad company and sold it to Fritz Gotwald, a dealer in old iron, who in turn sold it to the Penn iron company where it was identified as belonging to the railroad company. The defendants claimed that they found the iron in a pile below the rolling mill, 50 or 100 yards away from the railroad. The jury returned a verdict of guilty, and the court sentenced the defendant to four months' imprisonment on each indictment—one year in all.

Com'th vs. Henry Rappe, indicted for incest and adultery. His daughter, Lizzie Rappe, a rather simple-minded girl of 15 years, who is subject to falling fits, testified that during the absence of her mother at church her father came to her room and perpetrated the outrage. The girl's brother testified that he saw his father with his clothes off in the girl's room. The jury found him guilty and the court sentenced him to two years